



OFFICE OF FILM  
& LITERATURE  
CLASSIFICATION

*Tē Tari Whakarōpū Tukuata, Tuhituhinga*

## BOARD OF REVIEW DECISION

**Title of publication:** Into The River

**Other known title(s):** Not stated

**OFLC ref:** 1300727.000

**Medium:** Book

**Author:** Ted Dawe

**Publisher:** Mangakino University Press

**Country of origin:** New Zealand

**Language:** English, Māori

**Applicant:** Family First NZ

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| <b>Classification:</b> | Objectionable except if the publication is restricted to persons who have attained the age of 14 years. |
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**Descriptive note:** Parental advisory explicit content.

**Display conditions:** That any further publication of the book carry the same descriptive note as the present publication, reading "parental advisory explicit content".

**Date of entry in Register:** 08 January 2014

**Date of direction to issue a label:** No direction to issue a label has been issued

**Date of notice of decision:** 07 January 2014

### Summary of reasons for decision:

The book "Into the River" by Ted Dawe is a 279 page novel that tells the story of a young Maori boy who wins a scholarship to a prestigious boy's boarding school. In his first two years at the school he is academically successful, but ends up being expelled.

The book realistically describes challenges and issues which such a young boy might face. In the course of doing so, the book contains scenes, and deals with themes, that people may find offensive and upsetting. Those themes include bullying, underage casual and unsafe sex, drug taking and other matters. The book also includes the use of offensive language by a number of the characters.

Overall, when considering the section 3(1) test in light of section 3(3) and 3(4), the

Board considers that although this book does describe, depict or otherwise deal with matters such as sex, crime, cruelty and violence it does not do so in such a manner that the availability of the publication is likely to be injurious to the public good. Subject to the age limitation referred to below, the Board considers the book is likely to educate and inform young adults about the potentially negative consequences that can follow from involvement in casual sex, underage drinking, drug taking, crime, violence and bullying. The Board considers that the book serves a useful social purpose in raising these issues for thought and debate and creating a context which may help young adults think more deeply about the immediate and long term consequences of choices they may be called upon to make.

However, there are scenes in the book that are powerful and disturbing, and in the opinion of the Board run a real risk of shocking and disturbing young readers. Whilst those aged 14 and above are likely to have a level of maturity that enables them to deal with this, those below the age of 14 may not. Accordingly, the Board considers the publication should be age restricted to those who have attained the age of 14 years.

Accordingly, the Board classifies the book as objectionable except if the publication is restricted to persons who have attained the age of 14 years.

The Board also requires that any further publication of the book carry the same descriptive note as the present publication, reading "parental advisory explicit content".